From:	Kelley, Craig
To:	Hubert Murray
Subject:	Re: Cambridge City Council and the Israel BDS movement
Date:	Monday, April 23, 2018 4:53:28 PM

Overwhelmed does not even begin to describe the situation..... :)

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On Apr 23, 2018, at 4:46 PM, Hubert Murray <hmurray2012@gmail.com> wrote:

> Dear Craig,
>
> Thank you for your response to my email of April 13th - better than most of your colleagues.
>
> You are no doubt overwhelmed by the quantity of emails that have come your way regarding the proposal as to whether the City of Cambridge should or should not continue to purchase HP products in view of the central role that HP technology plays in the control of the Palestinian population by the Israeli government and military authorities. This volume of correspondence and public debate is itself an indication of the importance of this issue to many in your constituency. The occupation of Palestine by Israel and the manner of the occupation is in the end one of the great moral issues of our time and one that cannot be shirked by American taxpayers, nor by their elected representatives.
>
> I, and as I understand it, many others, have received in the mail two documents each of which paints a mendacious and scurrilous picture of the proposal to terminate the City's contract with HP. I wish to go on record to lay to rest accusations made in those documents and to clarify the intent of the forthcoming proposal.
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> The first document, an 8.5"x11" card printed in color on both sides, purporting to be from the Israeli-American Coalition for Action with an address in Los Angeles, California, states on the front that "Hate has no place in Cambridge" (with which I wholeheartedly agree) and on the other side asks the recipient to "Contact our (sic) City Council now and tell them to reject hate in Cambridge." While of course I agree that we should all reject hate I regard it as an impertinence for someone from the other side of the country to be referring to the Cambridge Council as "our". The card then goes on to accuse those who support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions resolution as subscribing to a "movement [that...] is deeply rooted in anti-Semitism."
>
> There are two legal issues here with which I am sure you are familiar. Firstly, the loaded statement, to implore council members to reject hate in Cambridge is to suggest that there is hate there to begin with, i.e. it is a false presumption, patently mischievous in intent. Secondly, it is utterly false, and one must suppose, intentionally misleading, to accuse the BDS movement itself or the entirety of its bona fide supporters of anti-Semitism. The BDS movement is a non-violent

movement aimed solely at the policy of the Israeli government that uses various forms of technology, military and civilian, to hold an entire population. BDS does not address Jews either specifically or in general. It is aimed solely at the continuing policies of the Israeli government in suppressing the Arab population (Muslims, Christians and others) in Israel proper, in the West Bank and in Gaza.

This leads me to respond to one of the issues raised by the second letter, from the Jewish Community Relations Council (with no address but apparently a national organization with a local chapter in Boston) which suggests that the "Cambridge City Council, by singling out Israel, would raise questions about whether our city has been coopted by a boycott movement that is itself rife with antiSemitism." In addition to the "anti-Semitism" canard this statement raises another issue, namely "why Israel?" and not say, Syria or Dongguan where there are all sorts of human rights abuses. Of course there is a long list of countries with all sorts of nefarious stuff going on but we in the United States and in Cambridge do have unique relations with Israel which in combination amount to cooperation and collusion in the oppressive practices of the Israeli government. We have just paid our taxes for 2017: the current, 2017, US aid to Israel is $3.1 billion, a figure higher than for any other country and the only aid package that was not cut in the recent budget review. In addition, Cambridge, along with other municipalities, has been in the practice of sending police to Israel for training in "security", a significant part of which is based on the technology purveyed by HP. As Cantabrigians and as US taxpayers we do have a very special relationship with the government of Israel. It is not BDS that is singling out Israel - it is Israel, our own government, and to bring it back home, our City Council that has done the singling.

Finally, on a personal note, as the grandson of someone who made it his business to provide safe haven for Jews fleeing from oppression in the years leading up to and including the holocaust; and as the son of a lawyer who made it his personal mission to prevent and mitigate the persecution of Jews in Germany and the Baltic States in the grim years leading up to that great disaster, I do not take it kindly to be accused of anti-Semitism, nor indeed of naivety. I hold my heritage in high honor and I am proud to be associated with those, then and now, who call oppression as they see it and who support BDS as a non-violent approach to having the main protagonists re-think an unjust and bankrupt violation of basis human rights.

Yours sincerely,
Hubert Murray

On Fri, Apr 13, 2018 at 9:38 AM, Kelley, Craig <ckelley@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

> Thanks for your note, Hubert.
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> I know next to nothing about this except that I am being bombarded with emails from people who seem to know more and I found a flyer at the Kennedy School last week. I am meeting with pro and con folks next week and the week after to learn more.

Not having seen the resolution, which won't be officially posted until the Thursday before the Council meeting, I cannot say anything with surety except that I will not support an attempt to delegitimize Israel although I could be supportive of something that expresses concerns over some of Israel's policies without singling them out as the only nation in the world with problematic policies.

I also think this is a lousy way to manipulate local government. If we want to take stances on good and bad in the world, and arguably we should, it only seems fair that we do so via some agreed upon criteria that does not single out specific entities for the sake of political expedience.

But like I said, I actually have not seen anything for the Council yet so my opinion is not well informed.

Craig

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